

IN THE CLAIMS

19. (currently amended) A semiconductor structure comprising:

a semiconductor substrate;

a conductive element located over the semiconductor substrate;

a dielectric spacer located adjacent to a sidewall of the conductive element, wherein an upper surface of the dielectric spacer is silicon-rich; and

a continuous silicide strap directly contacting the conductive element, the dielectric spacer and the semiconductor substrate.

20. (currently amended) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, wherein a portion of the dielectric spacer, located away from the upper surface of the dielectric spacer, is not silicon-rich.

21. (original) A semiconductor structure comprising:

a semiconductor substrate;

a conductive element located over the semiconductor substrate;

a dielectric spacer located adjacent to a sidewall of the conductive element;

a semiconductor region dispersed in the upper surfaces of the conductive element, the dielectric spacer and the semiconductor substrate; and

a silicide strap formed in the semiconductor region.

(7)  
→ it is not when  
the whole  
upper surface  
comprises  
a semiconductor  
region

22. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the dielectric spacer is silicon-rich.

23. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the semiconductor region comprises amorphous silicon.

24. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the semiconductor region comprises an implanted semiconductor layer.

25. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 24, wherein the implanted semiconductor layer comprises silicon.

26. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, wherein the silicide strap comprises a refractory metal layer reacted with semiconductor material in the conductive element, the dielectric spacer and the semiconductor substrate.

27. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 26, wherein the semiconductor material comprises amorphous silicon.

28. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, wherein the conductive element is a gate electrode.

29. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 28, further comprising a gate dielectric layer located between the semiconductor substrate and the gate electrode.

30. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, further comprising a source/drain region located in the semiconductor substrate, wherein the silicide strap contacts the source/drain region.

31. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, wherein the dielectric spacer comprises silicon oxide or silicon nitride.

32. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 19, wherein the silicide strap comprises cobalt silicide.

*D2 Cont.*  
33. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the silicide strap comprises a refractory metal layer reacted with the semiconductor region.

34. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the conductive element is a gate electrode.

35. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 34, further comprising a gate dielectric layer located between the semiconductor substrate and the gate electrode.

36. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, further comprising a source/drain region located in the semiconductor substrate, wherein the silicide strap contacts the source/drain region.

37. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the dielectric spacer comprises silicon oxide or silicon nitride.

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D<sup>2</sup> 38. (original) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the silicide strap comprises cobalt silicide.

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D<sup>3</sup> 39. (new) The semiconductor structure of Claim 21, wherein the upper surface of the dielectric spacer is silicon-rich, and wherein a portion of the dielectric spacer, located away from the upper surface of the dielectric spacer, is not silicon-rich.

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